

Court of Appeals of Florence
Section II Assise
Proc. Pen, 11/13

Letter sent to attorneys Carlo Dalla Vedova and Luciano Ghirga via email

Seattle, 15 December 2013

Attn: Honorable Court of Appeals of Florence

I have no doubt that my lawyers have explained and demonstrated the important facts of this case that prove my innocence and discredit the unjustified accusations of the prosecution and civil parties. I seek not to supplant their work; rather, because I am not present to take part in this current phase of the judicial process, I feel compelled to share my own perspective as a six-year-long defendant and victim of injustice.

The Court has access to my previous declarations and I trust will review them before coming to a verdict. I must repeat: I am innocent.

I am not a murderer. I am not a rapist. I am not a thief or a plotter or an instigator. I did not kill Meredith or take part in her murder or have any prior or special knowledge of what occurred that night. I was not there and had nothing to do with it.

I am not present in the courtroom because I am afraid. I am afraid that the prosecution's vehemence will leave an impression on you, that their smoke and mirrors will blind you. I'm afraid of the universal problem of wrongful conviction. This is not for lack of faith in your powers of discernment, but because the prosecution has succeeded before in convincing a perfectly sound court of concerned and discerning adults to convict innocent people—Raffaele and me.

My life being on the line and having with others already suffered too much, I've attentively followed this process and gleaned the following facts that have emerged from the development of this case that I beg you not to dismiss when making your judgment:

No physical evidence places me in Meredith's bedroom, the scene of the crime, because I was not there and didn't take part in the crime.

Meredith's murderer left ample evidence of his presence in the brutal scenario: handprints, footprints, shoe prints in Meredith's blood; DNA in her purse, on her clothing, in her body.

No evidence places me in the same brutal scenario. The prosecution has failed to explain how I could have participated in the aggression and murder—to have been the one to fatally wound Meredith—without leaving any genetic trace of myself. That is because it is impossible. It is impossible to identify and destroy all genetic traces of myself in a crime

scene and retain all genetic traces of another individual. Either I was there, or I wasn't. The analysis of the crime scene answers this question: I wasn't there.

My interrogation was illegal and produced a false "confession" that demonstrated my non-knowledge of the crime. The subsequent memoriali, for which I was wrongfully found guilty of slander, did not further accuse but rather recanted that false "confession." Just as I testified to the prosecutor in prison and to my family members in prison when our conversations were being recorded without my knowledge.

My behavior after the discovery of the murder indicates my innocence. I did not flee Italy when I had the chance. I stayed in Perugia and was at the police's beck and call for over 50 hours in four days, convinced that I could help them find the murderer. I never thought or imagined that they would have used my openness and trust to fuel their suspicions. I did not hide myself or my feelings: when I needed comfort, Raffaele embraced me; when I was sad and scared, I cried; when I was angry, I swore and made insensitive remarks; when I was shocked, I paced or sat in silence; when I was trying to help, I answered questions, consoled Meredith's friends and tried to keep a positive attitude.

Upon entering the questura I had no understanding of my legal position. Twenty-years old and alone in a foreign country, I was innocent and never expected to be suspected and subjugated to psychological torture. I was interrogated as a suspect, but told I was a witness. I was questioned for a prolonged period in the middle of the night and in Italian, a language I barely knew. I was denied legal counsel. The Court of Cassation deemed the interrogation and the statements produced from it illegal. I was lied to, yelled at, threatened, slapped twice on the back of the head. I was told I had witnessed the murder and was suffering from amnesia. I was told that if I didn't succeed in remembering what happened to Meredith that night I would never see my family again. I was browbeaten into confusion and despair. When you berate, intimidate, lie to, threaten, confuse, and coerce someone in believing they are wrong, you are not going to find the truth.

The police coerced me into signing a false "confession" that was without sense and should never have been considered a legitimate investigative lead. In this fragmentary and confused statement the police identified Patrick Lumumba as the murderer because we had exchanged text messages, the meaning of which the police wrongfully interpreted ('Ci vediamo più tardi. Buona serata'). The statement lacked a clear sequence of events, corroboration with any physical evidence, and fundamental information like: how and why the murder took place, if anyone else was present or involved, what happened afterward—it supplied partial, contradictory information and as the investigators would discover a little later, when Patrick Lumumba's defense lawyer produced proof of him incontestable alibi, it was obviously inaccurate and unreliable. *I simply didn't know what they were demanding me to know.* After over 50 hours of questioning over four days, I was mentally exhausted and I was *confused*.

This coerced and illegitimate statement was used by the police to arrest and detain a clearly innocent man with an iron-clad alibi with whom I had a friendly professional relationship. This coerced and illegitimate statement was used to convict me of slander. The prosecution and civil parties would have you believe that this coerced and illegitimate statement is proof of my involvement in the murder. They are accusing and blaming me, a result of their own overreaching.

Experience, case studies, and the law recognize that one may be coerced into giving a false “confession” because of psychological torture.

This is a universal problem. According to the National Registry of Exoneration, in the United States 78% of wrongful murder convictions that are eventually overturned because of exonerating forensic evidence involved false “confessions.” Almost 8 in 10 wrongfully convicted persons were coerced by police into implicating themselves and others in murder. I am not alone. And exonerating forensic evidence is often as simple as no trace of the wrongfully convicted person at the scene of the crime, but rather the genetic and forensic traces of a different guilty party—just like every piece of forensic evidence identifies not me, but Rudy Guede.

In the brief time Meredith and I were roommates and friends we never fought.

Meredith was my friend. She was kind to me, helpful, generous, fun. She never criticized me. She never gave me so much as a dirty look.

But the prosecution claims that a rift was created between Meredith and I because of cleanliness. This is a distortion of the facts. Please refer to the testimonies of my housemates and Meredith’s British friends. None of them ever witnessed or heard about Meredith and I fighting, arguing, disliking each other. None of them ever claimed Meredith was a confrontational clean-freak, or I a confrontational slob. Laura Mezzetti testified that both Meredith and I only occasionally cleaned, whereas she and Filomena Romanelli were more concerned with cleanliness. Meredith’s British friends testified that Meredith had once told them that she felt a little uncomfortable about finding the right words to kindly talk to me, her new roommate, about cleanliness in the bathroom we shared. The prosecution would have you believe this is motivation for murder. But this is a terrifying distortion of the facts.

I did not carry around Raffaele’s kitchen knife.

This claim by the prosecution, crucial to their theory, is uncorroborated by any physical evidence or witness testimony. I didn’t fear the streets of Perugia and didn’t need to carry around with me a large, cumbersome weapon which would have ripped my cloth book bag to shreds. My book bag showed no signs of having carried a bloody weapon. The claim that he would have insisted I carry a large chef’s knife is not just senseless, but a disturbing indication of how willing the prosecution is to defy objectivity and reason in order to sustain a mistaken and disproven theory.

It is yet another piece of invented “evidence”, another circumstance of theory fabricated to order, because having discovered nothing else, the prosecution could only invent.

I had no contact with Rudy Guede.

Like many youth in Perugia, I had once crossed paths with Rudy Guede. He played basketball with the young men who lived in the apartment below us. Meredith and I had been introduced to him together. Perhaps I had seen him amongst the swarms of students

who crowded the Perugian streets and pubs in the evenings, but that was it. We didn't have each other's phone number, we didn't meet in private, we weren't acquaintances. I never bought drugs from Rudy Guede or anyone else. The phone records show no connection. There are no witnesses who place us together. The prosecution claims I convinced Rudy Guede to commit rape and murder, completely ignoring the fact that we didn't even speak the same language. Once again, the prosecution is relying upon a disturbing and unacceptable pattern of distortion of the objective evidence.

I am not a psychopath.

There is no short list to the malicious and unfounded slanders I have suffered over the course of this legal process. In trial I have been called no less than:

"Conniving; manipulating; man-eater; narcissist; enchantress; duplicitous; adulterer; drug addict; an explosive mix of drugs, sex, and alcohol; dirty; witch; murderer; slanderer; demon; depraved; imposter; promiscuous; succubus; evil; dead inside; pervert; dissolute; psychopath; a wolf in sheep's clothing; rapist; thief; reeking of sex; Judas; she-devil; Luciferina..."

I have never demonstrated anti-social, aggressive, violent, or psychotic behavior. I am not addicted to sex or drugs. Upon my arrest I was tested for drugs and the results were negative. I am not a split-personality psychopath. One does not adopt psychotic behavior spontaneously.

This is a fantasy. This is uncorroborated by any objective evidence or testimony. The prosecution and civil parties created and pursued this character assassination because they have nothing else to show you. They have neither proof, nor logic, nor the facts on their side. They only have their slanders against me, their personal opinions about me. They want you to think I'm a monster because it is easy to condemn a monster. It is easy to dismiss a monster's defense as deception. But the prosecution and civil parties are both severely mistaken and wrong. They have condemned me without proof of guilt, and they seek to convince you to condemn me without proof of guilt.

If the prosecution truly had a case against me, there would be no need for these theatrics. There would be no need for smoke and mirrors to distract you from the lack of physical evidence against me. But because no evidence exists that proves my guilt, the prosecution would seek to deceive you with these impassioned, but completely inaccurate and unjustified pronouncements. Because I am not a murderer, they would seek to mislead you into convicting me by charging your emotions, by painting me not as an innocent until proven guilty, but as a monster.

The prosecution and civil parties are committing injustices against me because they cannot bring themselves to admit, even to themselves, that they've made a terrible mistake.

The Court has seen that the prosecution and civil parties will not hear criticism of their mistakes. Not by the experts of the defense, nor by the experts of the Court.

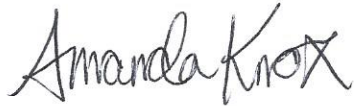
The Court has seen that the prosecution jumped to conclusions at the very start of their investigation: they interrogated and arrested innocent people and claimed "Case Closed" before any evidence could be analyzed, before bothering to check alibis.

The prosecutor and investigators were under tremendous pressure to solve the mystery of what happened to Meredith as soon as possible. The local and International media was breathing down the necks of these detectives. Their reputations and careers were to be made or broken. In their haste, they made mistakes. Under pressure, they admitted to as few mistakes as possible and committed themselves to a theory founded upon mistakes.

Had they not jumped to conclusions based on nothing but their personal and highly subjective *feeling*, they would have discovered definitive and undeniable evidence of not Patrick Lumumba, not Raffaele Sollecito, not Amanda Knox, but of Rudy Guede. We would not be here over six years later debating inconclusive and unreliable "clues." We would have been spared the cost, anguish and suffering, not only of Raffaele's and my family, but especially of Meredith's family as well.

The prosecution's accusations are unworthy of judicial or public confidence. In over six years they have failed to provide a consistent, evidence-driven, corroborated theory of the crime, but would nevertheless argue that you should take my life away. I beg you to see the facts and reason of what I say. I am innocent. Raffaele is innocent. Meredith and her family deserve the truth. Please put an end to this great and prolonged injustice.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Knox". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Amanda Marie Knox